(c) whether Government have some proposals to privatise some units of Rourkela Steel Plant;

(d) if so, the names of the units proposed for privatisation;

(e) the proposals before Governemnt to revive Rourkela Steel Plant; and

(f) the total amount of fresh packages proposed to revive RSP and the time schedule for it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (f) Modernisation scheme in Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) is at an advanced stage of completion. The modernised units are under stabilisation. At present, the loss of RSP, based on half yearly results of 1998-99, averages to approximately Rs. 2 crore per day. With stabilisation, the performance of RSP would improve. At present, further major investments in RSP are not planned. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) have no firm proposal to privatise the units of RSP. However, SAIL plans to formulate subsidiary companies/joint ventures for non-core units.

Sectoral reforms in steel sector

899. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to effect sectoral reforms including tariff protection to the steel sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) A Working Group had been set up by Government to study the present slow down in the steel sector. The Group has since submitted its report. The recommendations of the Working Group, inter-alia include:

(i) Rationalisation of DEPB (Duty Exemption Pass Book) Scheme rates, and extension of the Scheme to 'deemed exports'.

(ii) To consider feasibility of converting ad-valorem rate of import duty into fixed duties on certain finished steel items.

(iii) To consider a combination of measures comprising levy of special import duty on imports of seconds and defectives along with raising duties for certain types of steel upto World Trade Organisation bound rates.

(iv) To consider removal of imports of Seconds and Defectives below a specific floor price, from OGL.

(v) to deal with cases of dumping by establishing a fast track mechanism.

(vi) Withdrawal/waiver of Special Customs Duty of 2%+3% and Special Additional Duty of 4% on input items for steel sector which are not available within the country.

Modernisation of Steel Plant

900. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steel plants in the country;

(b) how many out of them are being modernised;

(c) whether help in modernisation of the plants is being sought from the foreign companies or private enterprises; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) There are 187 EAF based steel plants in the country.

(b) As per available information, modernisation programme has been taken up in four steel plants in the public and private sector. As most of the steel plants are in the private sector, initiative has to